STATE OF MARYLAND

MARYLAND HEALTH CARE COMMISSION
4160 PATTERSON AVENUE – BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21215
AREA CODE 410-764-3460   FAX 410-358-1236

TO: Potential Offerors

FROM: Sharon M. Wiggins
                 Procurement Officer

DATE: June 5, 2008

SUBJECT: **Addendum #1 – MHCC 09-001 Request for Proposal (RFP)**
                 Establish and Manage a Quality Measure Data Center to Support the
                 Maryland Hospital Performance Evaluation System

Enclosed is a list of the prospective vendors who attended the Pre-proposal conference held on Tuesday, June 3, 2008, and questions/responses discussed during that meeting.

As mentioned, a transcript of the Pre-proposal conference and any additional questions received will be posted to the three (3) websites: eMaryland Marketplace, DHMH & MHCC on Friday, June 13, 2008 not later than 4:00 p.m. Additional questions may be submitted to the Commission until Wednesday, June 11, 2008 @ 4:00 p.m. to swiggins@mhcc.state.md.us,

Appendix C, MHCC Website Requirements, (attached) has been revised and should replace the document in the original RFP.

Please acknowledge receipt of all amendments/addenda pertaining to this RFP. Acknowledgements should be included in the technical proposal submission of an offer. (See Part II – Organization of Proposal).

NOTES:

        - MBE Attachment A at the time of submission of the offeror must be included in the Technical Proposal.

- MBE Attachment B at the time of submission of the offer must be included in the Financial Proposal.

Failure to include either MBE Attachment with its appropriate proposal (Attachment A – Technical Proposal)/ (Attachment B – Financial Proposal) will render the entire proposal "Not Reasonably Susceptible" of being awarded a contract and cause the Commission to cease consideration of it.

As a reminder**,** all sealed proposals are due to the Commission's office by 4:00 p.m. (local time) on Friday, July 11, 2008. Late proposals **will not** be accepted.

Enclosures

PLEASE READ THIS ADDENDUM CAREFULLY.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ADDENDUM

I hereby acknowledge the receipt of Addendum #1 to RFP for MHCC 09-001-entitled "Establish and Management a Quality Measures Data Center to Support the Maryland Hospital Performance Evaluation System" dated June 5, 2008.

_____

Signature

_____

Print Name

_____

Company

_____

Address

_____

Phone

Questions/Responses

Question #1
RFP Section and Title: 4.0 Services to be Performed, 4.1A Core Quality Measures, **pages** 14, 15

Question: Are the core measures referenced in this proposal the same core measures that are currently publicly reported on Hospital Compare?

Answer: Yes. The core measures referenced in the RFP are the measures collected through the Clinical Data Warehouse and publicly reported on Hospital Compare.

Question #2
RFP Section and Title: 4.0 Services to be Performed, 4.1A Core Quality Measures, **pages** 14, 15

Question: As new measures are added to Hospital Compare, is the expectation they will be added for this contract or removed (i.e. retired)?

Answer: Appendix A includes a chart that identifies measures currently being reported on the Guide as well as those measures that are planned for future implementation. Because this contract covers a five-year period, it is anticipated that new measures will be added to the Guide as part of the scope of work. The Commission will annually review the measures to determine whether they should continue to be collected and will add new measures as appropriate. This will be done in consultation with the Hospital Performance Evaluation Guide and HAI Advisory Committees.

Question #3
RFP Section and Title: 4.0 Services to be Performed, 4.3 Data Analysis and Report Generation, page 20.

Question: Quality Measures Statistical Brief Report- Once the commission identifies the content of the brief, how much time would the contractor be allowed to prepare the report?

Answer: The MHCC shall work with the contractor to determine a reasonable turnaround time for the deliverable. The timeframe shall be determined by consideration of such factors as data availability, complexity of the analysis, legislative requirements and/or deadlines. The schedule for preparation will be a component of the design document for the series and analysis plan for individual statistical brief documents.

Question #4

RFP Section and Title: 2.0 Volume 1: Technical Proposal, 3. Experience and Qualifications of Personnel and Staffing Plan, page 27

Question: The last line of the first paragraph of this section states that: "Letters of intended commitment to work on the project from all personnel including subcontractors should be included with the proposal". Does this include the Prime contractor's full time staff?

Answer: Yes.

Question #5
RFP Section and Title: 2.0 Volume 1: Technical Proposal, 4.0 Services to be Performed, C. Healthcare-Associated Infections Data (HAI), page 18

Question: The last line at the top of the page appears to be incomplete: "This review, which will be conducted in consultation with the HAI Advisory Committee and appropriate agencies" Can we get the remainder of the text for this requirement?

Answer: The entire sentence should read as follows: This review, which will be conducted in consultation with the HAI Advisory Committee and appropriate agencies, will consider modifications to the National Healthcare Safety Network System.

Question #6
RFP Section and Title: 2.2 Summary of items to be completed and submitted with Technical Proposal., B. Bid/Proposal Affidavit, page 29

Question: B. lists affidavits, both with the same title "Bid/Proposal Affidavit" included as Appendix G and Appendix H of the RFP. We note that Appendix G is in fact titled "Bid/Proposal Affidavit" and Appendix H is titled "Contract Affidavit" and assume you want both submitted. Is this correct?

Answer: A "Bid/Proposal Affidavit" (Appendix G)"and a "Contract Affidavit" (Appendix H) must be submitted with the Technical Proposal.

Item 2.2 B. should be corrected as follows:

Bid/Proposal Affidavit & Contract Affidavit
State procurement regulations require that each proposal submitted by an offeror include a Bid/Proposal Affidavit. A copy of this Affidavit is included as Appendix G of this RFP. State procurement regulations require that each proposal submitted by an offeror include a Contract Affidavit. A copy of this Affidavit is included as Appendix H of Part VI of this RFP.

Question #7
RFP Section and Title: 4.1 Hospital Performance Data Collection and Processing, A. Core Quality Measures, **page #:** 15, 2nd paragraph states "The contractor shall identify alternative data collection tools for those hospitals that do not have any other method of reporting…"

Question: Please provide clarification of the intent for identifying alternative tools – do you anticipate the contractor will actually develop data collection tools or just identify what tools may be in the market?

Answer: The intent for identifying alternative tools is to provide assistance to hospitals, particularly small hospitals, on what tools may be available to facilitate compliance with quality data collection and reporting requirements. It is not expected that the contractor will develop the data collection tools for hospitals as part of this contract. The intent is to fully utilize the knowledge and expertise of the contractor.

Question #8
RFP Section and Title: 4.1 Hospital Performance Data Collection and Processing, C. Healthcare-Associated Infections Data (HAI), page **#:** 17, 3rd paragraph – "The contractor shall establish a process to review and resolve data quality issues and problems with hospitals during the reporting period."

Question: Please clarify the process intended to resolve the data quality issues – will providers be allowed to resubmit or will there be specific parameters regarding what types of data issues can be resolved. Can MHCC describe the types of data issues that we should anticipate to determine how to project the staffing around technical assistance, help desk support and/or resubmissions?

Answer: The text of the third paragraph on page 17 has been corrected to delete the sentence: "The contractor shall establish a process to review and resolve data quality issues and problems with the hospitals during the review period."

Question #9
RFP Section and Title: 4.1 Hospital Performance Data Collection and Processing, E. Outpatient Date, Other Outpatient Data, page 19, "The MHCC staff will review other outpatient measures, in consultation with the Hospital Performance Evaluation Advisory Committee, to determine whether they should be collected and will add new measures based on this review."

Question: Although Appendix A provides a preliminary list, please provide estimates of how many measures the contractor will be expected to support on an annual basis. Should we only base the estimates on Appendix A?

Answer: Your estimates should be based on the list of measures included in Appendix A. See response to Question 2.

Question #10
RFP Section and Title: 4.3 Data Analysis and Report Generation, Annual Report on Hospital Quality, page 19, "The contractor shall develop an Annual report providing trend data over time on quality measure performance for individual hospitals, groups of hospitals and the State as a whole compared to the US experience when available"

Question: Please describe MHCC's preferences or types of analysis expected to provide data over time for the "groups of hospitals" – is this based on bed size, geographic region, services provided etc.?

Answer: The MHCC staff will work with the contractor to determine the preferred method of grouping hospitals for comparison/display purposes. Hospital characteristics and geographic region are among the standard methods for grouping providers. The process of developing a design document for the Annual Report will consider this issue in detail.

Question #11
RFP Section and Title: 4.7 Other Requirements, A. Special Studies, page 21, "… Data may be reviewed to determine if there are disparities based on socio-economics, race, ethnicity or geography factors. The contractor will provide MHCC staff with ad hoc reports upon request."

Question: Please provide estimates of the number and type of ad hoc requests by MHCC on a monthly or annual basis.

Answer: It is difficult to estimate the number and type of ad hoc requests to be made on an annual or monthly basis. For the purpose of estimating costs associated with this requirement, we have identified 500 hours of analytical work annually.

Question #12
RFP Section and Title 4.5, Creation of Analytic and Public Use Data Files, page 21

Question: Is it envisioned that these files be created at the provider level (de-identified or identified), de-identified case level, or both? Please clarify the intended audience(s) for the files.

Answer: The public use files will be created in a manner that protects patient confidentiality and promotes use of the data for hospital quality assessment and improvement. The MHCC staff will work with the contractor to determine how to achieve these two objectives.   It is envisioned that analytic and/or public use data files will be developed for use by other state agencies, policymakers, and the hospital industry. It is anticipated that certain files will include case level data.

Question #13
RFP Section and Title 4.5, Creation of Analytic and Public Use Data Files, page 21

The last sentence in this section states "File format specifications and data element documentation shall be provided for the analytic and public use files." Does this mean the contractor will provide this documentation for the files it produces, or does this mean that the MHCC will provide the specifications and documentation for the files to be produced by the contractor?

Answer: The contractor, in consultation with the MHCC staff will develop the documentation and specifications for the analytic and public use files that are created.

Question #14
RFP Section 2.2.I, page 29**, RFP Section 3.2(2),** page 30

Question: Please clarify MHCC's requirement for the Confidentiality Statement with Justification. Should it be included in Volume I, Technical Proposal as in RFP section 2.2.I on page 29 or should it be included in Volume II, Financial Proposal as in RFP Section 3.2.(2) on page 30?

Answer: The 'Confidentiality Statement with Justification' should be included in Volume I, Technical Proposal as stated on page 29.

Question #15
RFP Appendix C, pages 67-68

Question: This appendix is titled "Website Requirements." We presume that the requirements listed apply only to the Maryland Hospital Performance Evaluation Guide and supporting technology used in Service 4.2 of the RFP, and do not apply to any information system developed by the contractor to support services 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, or 4.7. Please confirm our interpretation of Appendix C.

Answer: The" Website Requirements" found in Appendix C apply to the Hospital Guide and supporting technology. This includes the website that will be used for the preview of hospital data.

Question #16
General Question

For Service 4.1, Will the contractor be expected to host the hardware and software needed to support the Quality Measures data center?
        a. If yes, will MHCC pay for this necessary hardware and software?
        b. If no, where will the Quality Measures Data Center be hosted?

Answer: The MHCC expects that the hardware and software needed to support the Quality Measures Data Center will be housed and operated from the contractor's office. The financial proposal should include all costs, including hardware and software, associated with the provision of services required by this RFP.

Correction
RFP, Part VI, Appendix A, pages 61-63

The column heading, Renewal Option should be deleted. The columns entitled Option Year 1 and Option Year 2 should be revised to state Contract Year 4 and Contract Year 5, respectively.

(REVISED)

Requirements for Web Development

Last Update: 6/3/2008

General Requirements

All web development must be done using VB.NET in Microsoft Visual Studio 2008 and must be designed to be fully accessible to non-visual users (see *accessibility requirements*). The Web server environment is Microsoft Windows Server 2008, IIS V7, .NET V3.5, using Microsoft SQL Server 2005.

All applications will be fully developed and tested in the developer's test environment before installation on an MHCC server where it will be tested in the production environment. MHCC will be notified before installation on an MHCC production server. All software, web application design and database structures must be approved by MHCC prior to development. Deliverables include installation and testing to be completed on the MHCC server at least 2 weeks prior to being live on the website.

All user data queries, including inputs such as variables, text boxes, URL parameters, to the SQL Server must be coded to prevent SQL injection attacks by not allowing client-supplied data to directly modify the intended SQL statement syntax.

The highest priority of the development is to design the application so that data updates and modifications or additions to the application can occur in a straightforward and simple manner by the staff of the Commission. The following should be met in the application design:

1. when data updates are needed, a simple replacement of the SQL tables should be all that is necessary for the application to run
2. when modifications are needed to the language on the web pages, the amount of information presented, or addition of new pages, these can be easily integrated into the existing application by Commission staff.

Resumes, a letter of commitment, references and samples of similar work done within the past year must be provided from web application staff with the bid. If the application development is subcontracted, the same items are required.

Accessibility Requirements

Maryland law requires that all state websites be accessible to non-visual users. COMAR 17.06.02 requires that Maryland state government agencies provide information technology (IT) that is non-visually accessible. IT includes web sites, which are a primary means for the public to gain information about and access to services from the state. This law is compliant with federal standards in Section 508B which is an amendment to the Workforce Rehabilitation Act of 1973, requiring that all electronic information developed or purchased by the federal government be made accessible to people with disabilities.

Any use of java scripting, AJAX or any other type of scripting or code which does not accommodate non-visual access to the application will not be accepted. The vendor is expected to be familiar with accessibility law and to be able to develop web applications accordingly.

Requirements for Web Development

Application Testing Requirements

1. *All software applications shall be thoroughly tested before delivery. The vendor shall document the tests that were conducted. The testing shall be appropriate to the application developed. Applications should be tested using real data which can be obtained from MHCC.*
2. *Applications will be tested thoroughly on the MHCC server before going live and testing will be complete at least 2 weeks prior to production.*

Deliverables
The vendor shall provide MHCC with an application design document prior to the start of development which will include the following:
- Flow chart of the application
- Description of how the application will be coded
- Description of how ADA compliance will be addressed
- preliminary structure of the SQL tables used
- design and implementation schedule
- any software acquisition which is not specified here must be pre-approved by the Commission

The final application design shall provide the following:
- electronic copy of data dictionary including data source, field names, labels, type, length, valid value range, whether missing values are valid. If Access or SQL database used, then need same info for each table.
- Help screens
- Flow chart of the application including decision-making points and screen shots with the field names noted
- Documentation of database tables and views with keys identified
- an electronic copy of all developed software and web pages
- documentation of any data cleaning and/or processing procedures
- documentation of the data update process

If the application is a web-based survey then the following must also be included:
- List of error checks and messages programmed for each input field,
- Skip patterns (if questions can be skipped depending on facility type or question),
- Calculated and pre-loaded fields identified indicating their source and the calculation
- Drop-down box values
- Help screens